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THE

PROMPTER,

A

SERIES OF ESSAYS

ON CIVIL AND SOCIAL DUTIES.



PUBLISHED ORIGINALLY

IN THE

UPPER CANADA HERALD.



Kingston,

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1821.

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PREFACE.

THE following *Essays*, designed for common readers of a *News-paper*, were purposely written in a plain every-day style, with some regard to perspicuity, but very little attention to method or embellishment. The subjects were suggested by circumstances, and adapted to the state of the country and the times. A few repetitions will, it is presumed, be excused by those who consider that popular instruction, to be effectual, must be inculcated by "precept upon precept, and line upon line." The writer's object was to promote the improvement of the *Province*, particularly the *District* of his residence, by pointing the attention of his fellow subjects to matters of importance in rural economy and the philosophy of common life. For the same purpose, these occasional numbers are now collected, and republished, in the form of a pamphlet, of moderate price, the avails of which, if any, beyond defraying the expence of printing, are to be paid by the publisher to the *Agricultural Society* of the *District*, in aid of their funds.

THE PROMPTER.

Kingston, Feb. 10, 1821.

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THE PROMPTER.



NUMBER I.

FROM the peculiar circumstances, under which this Province was settled, learning was at first, less cultivated here, than in some other new settlements. An indifference to books and other sources of information was the natural consequence. It has continued for a series of years. A taste for reading, however, seems to be spreading through many of our townships. I hope it will be extended, and become general. The circulation of newspapers will promote it, and be promoted by it, in turn. These weekly vehicles of intelligence, if properly conducted and well supported, ought to be read in families, not merely as the immediate means of learning the passing events and news of the day, but for the further purpose of cultivating a habit of reading and a taste for information. Such a taste, when once acquired, "grows with our growth, and strengthens with our strength." This has been experienced in almost every family, in which a periodical publication has been, for any considerable time, taken and read. With this view, the paper should be filed and preserved, to give an opportunity of recurring to it and reperusing its contents, as leisure, curiosity or any particular occasion may prompt. Such a recurrence is frequently desirable, especially in country places, and in families not very plentifully supplied with books. Many a man has regretted that he did not preserve a file of his newspapers. The trouble of it is very inconsiderable, in proportion to the satisfaction and utility of it. It may be advantageously commenced with the first number of a new volume or a new year, and still more so, with the commencement of the paper itself.

As you, Mr. Editor, have, in your Prospectus, promised

a News-Paper "as instructive, entertaining and authentic, as your best exertions can make it," I take the liberty of recommending to your subscribers to file away and preserve the successive numbers of the the *Upper-Canada Herald*; that, at the end of the year, they may have a full opportunity of judging how well you perform your promise.

NUMBER II.

THE geography of any country is a progressive science, changing with the changes in the state of the country and its various natural and civil divisions. This variation is really greater, and much more observable, in new countries, than in those which have been long settled and have acquired a more fixed and permanent state.

The province of Upper-Canada being new and thinly settled, its geography is yet very imperfect. To point out such of its imperfections, as are susceptible of easy correction, not for the sake of exposure, but with a view to practical improvement, is a laudable undertaking.

At present I shall only notice one circumstance existing within the immediate circulation of the *Herald*.

There is a distinction between Towns and Townships. The whole country, so far as it has been surveyed, is laid out into Townships, corresponding in some respects, with the parochial divisions of England, but more uniform and regular in their extent; whereas there are scarcely a dozen Towns in the Province. In the proper geographical language of Upper-Canada, a Town, whether laid out as such in the original survey, or subsequently established, is a comparatively small part of the Township to which it belongs; being what our neighbours in the state of New-York would denominate the Village of the Township. But several Townships in the District of Johnstown, and one range in the Midland District, from Kingston up to the Carrying Place, and from the River Trent, down on the north side of the Bay of Quinte, to Camden on the Appanee River, were vulgarly styled Towns, distin-

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guished by numbers. The Township of Kingston was called First Town ; Ernest Town, Second Town ; and so on, to Camden, which was Eleventh town. A similar series of numbers were attached to the Townships first laid out in the district of Johnstown.

This designation of Townships by numbers was necessary at first, there being then no proper names legally given to any of them. The necessity, however, soon afterwards ceased, when a legal, appropriate name was assigned, by public authority, to each Township. But the custom being once introduced, was unnecessarily continued, and is retained to this day, by many of the original inhabitants, and such of their descendants and others who have settled among them, as are illiterate and have but little intercourse with the world. Some of them seem to be so local and limited in their information, as to be hardly sensible that their Townships have proper names ; and probably, do not know that there are Townships in an adjoining district having the same numbers with their own ; so that a letter directed to a person in a township described by its number, without distinguishing the district, is liable to be transmitted to a wrong place, and perhaps to a person not intended. Several laughable mistakes of this kind are said to have happened. One of them, connected with the remittance of a sum of money, is likely to become the subject of a lawsuit. Uncertainty or confusion in the names of places is sometimes a serious evil, and is often attended with ridiculous incidents.

The retention of these numerical Nick-names of townships is a striking exemplification of the force of habit. When the inhabitants who use them are reminded that their language in this particular appears to others unintelligible, they readily acknowledge its impropriety, and admit that townships ought to be mentioned in conversation as they are described in all public proceedings, legal process, deeds and other writings ; but add, that they have been so accustomed to the numbers of the townships, that they do not think of their names. Let the custom descend through one or two generations more, and it would be adhered to with the pertinacity of local and hereditary pride.

To the candour of the present inhabitants, therefore, I submit it, as a matter of propriety and duty, to endeavour to correct this vulgar error, and conform the language of their townships to that of the country at large.

NUMBER III.

INTERNAL improvements, particularly in the means of inland travel and transportation, seem to be the order of the day, among our neighbours on the other side of the lake. In such works of public utility, the State of New-York holds the foremost rank. The present Governor of that populous state urges it, with all his personal and official influence, and is seconded by the Legislature, and supported by the voluntary exertions of the citizens residing on the routes of the projected roads and canals. Vast sums of money and labor have been applied, and are in a train of application, to the formation of the Western Canal, intended to open a communication between the waters of lake Erie and the Hudson's river, and to be connected in its course, with various stage roads.

Such efforts on that side of the lake will inevitably give our enterprising neighbours a decided commercial ascendancy over us in this Province, unless we make some corresponding exertions; to which we are invited, not only by a spirit of fair competition, but also by the advantages, which the God of nature has put into our hands.

Between Montreal and Lake Ontario, the river affords us at least as good natural accommodations for navigation, as they have on the other side, and more convenient situations for the artificial aids of locks and canals. Kingston is a far better commercial depot and outlet from the lake, than any on the opposite shore. Between the St Lawrence and the head of the lake, the superiority of advantages for navigation is on our side, and the facilities of inland communication are still more decisively in our favor. From Kingston towards York, we have a natural canal superior to any artificial one which could be formed at the expence of millions, and extending seventy miles at least, through

one of the most fertile and populous Districts of the Province. From the head of the Bay of Quinte, there is a road, capable of being made, by reasonable exertions, an excellent stage road, directly to York, the capital of the province. It passes through a range of townships of the first order in point of fertility, and most of them already containing a considerable population which is rapidly increasing every year. The increase would be accelerated by a liberal improvement of the means of travelling. The soil, in general, is not only fertile, but favourable for a good road. It is true, some of the lands on this route are owned by non-residents, a circumstance which has hitherto operated unfavourably, as to the settlement of those townships. But it is hoped, the proprietors, if they do not wish to have their lands immediately settled, will esteem it their interest, as well as their duty, to unite in contributing to the improvement of that important public road. The inhabitants of the townships, through which it passes, it is presumed, will feel a commendable emulation to promote so valuable an object. Those who cannot pay money, should contribute labor, to be applied, under the direction, and to the satisfaction, of some judicious superintendent of the work. For this purpose a subscription should be circulated before the opening of the Spring. By such exertions for promoting the practical improvement and prosperity of their country, they will more effectually prove their attachment to it, and do more to guard against the boasted superiority of our neighbours on the other side of the lake, than by the loudest professions of patriotism and loyalty, or the most eloquent invectives against our national rivals.

NUMBER IV.

WHEAT is the staple production of Upper-Canada, and flour ought to be our best article of exportation. Our soil is adapted to it; the climate is favourable; and the habits of our people are formed to the growing of this valuable grain. Yet our flour has not so high a character,

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as it ought to have in market. The flour of Genesee has claimed a superiority to that of the Head of the Lake, or the Bay of Quinte ; a superiority, which I hope our growers, manufacturers and inspectors will not be willing hereafter to yield ; although, I believe, Genesee produces better flour than the average of the state of New-York. Indeed it is well known in the mercantile world, that the flour exported from the port of New-York is considered inferior to that of Philadelphia and Baltimore ; and the New-York merchants and manufacturers of flour, as well as their legislature, are taking measures to improve the quality of their flour, in order to raise its price in foreign markets. In this Province, also, every practicable effort should be made, by all persons concerned, in the various departments of labour connected with so important an article of produce, not only to increase the quantity produced in the Province for consumption and exportation, but also to send it into market in as pure and perfect a state as possible. Our farmers should increase their care in preparing their ground, in procuring the purest and fairest seed, free from any mixture of inferior grain, in sowing it in proper season and manner, in weeding out the stalks of cockle that appear in the field, in harvesting and securing their crop, in cleaning it for the mill, and saving it from heating in the heap ; and our millers should be stimulated to double diligence in grinding and packing it, so as to guard against such injury as it too frequently sustains from being unskillfully and carelessly packed. Inspectors have a responsible duty enjoined upon them by law and their oath of office. The state of markets requires an increased attention to these particulars, in order to establish the reputation of our staple export, and secure a reasonable price for it.

NUMBER V.

VARIOUS species of fruit trees, which are cultivated to advantage in more southern latitudes, are not adapted to this climate ; and it would be a waste of labour to attempt the cultivation of them here. But that is not true of the **APPLE** tree, which grows very well on the northern side

of Lake Ontario. This is the most valuable of all species of fruit. It contributes most to the support and comfort of life ; as it may be applied, in various modes of cookery used in families, and also converted into that pleasant and healthy beverage, Cider. Experience has proved, that a settler, going upon a new farm, cannot augment the value of the land he clears by any other means, so much, in proportion to the expense, as by setting out an orchard of Apple trees, and paying the necessary attention to their preservation and growth. Whether, therefore, he expects to spend his life on that farm, or intends to prepare it for sale, at an increased price, it is his interest to plant an Apple Orchard as soon as he has cleared the ground sufficiently for the purpose.

The gradual growth of fruit trees is, probably, one principal reason why they are so much neglected. If they could be brought to a productive state in one year, with ten times as much expense as they in fact cost, many would have orchards, who wholly neglect them, in consideration of the length of time which must pass, after they are planted, before they bear fruit. A few weeks ago, I conversed on this subject, with an old settler in a neighbouring township, who has a young orchard just beginning to bear. He said, that for many years after he had settled upon his lot, he thought of procuring and setting out apple trees ; but omitted to do it, from an apprehension that he should not live to eat of the fruit. At length, however, he did it, under a conviction that if he should not enjoy the benefit himself, his children might ; and he had already lived to see his orchard become so productive, as to furnish an ample supply of Apples for the use of his family and a surplus sufficient to make a considerable quantity of cider.

No class of people can live with more independence and comfort than our farmers, who own the soil which they cultivate, and expect their children to inherit it after them ; and one would think they needed no Prompter to point out to them the benefit of providing themselves and their families with apples and cider.

Yet orchards are sadly neglected in this district, and many other parts of the province. It is true there are some

honorable exceptions ; but the neglect is unfortunately too general. The circumstances, under which the country was settled, afforded, for some years, a degree of apology for it. But there can now be no reasonable excuse. The time has arrived for improvement in every thing which may increase the wealth, the comfort and accommodation of the inhabitants of the Province, and render it a desirable place of residence. In this respect our interest as individuals, and our duty as patriots, concur in requiring us to promote, both by precept and example, the general cultivation of fruit, particularly of Apples, as one of the surest and most necessary improvements of the country. Every friend to it may thus subserve its interest while pursuing his own.

The planting of nurseries should be encouraged in every township ; and care should be taken, not only to increase the quantity, but also to improve the quality of apples, there being no article of produce more susceptible of amelioration by artificial means than this most useful fruit.

If men of intelligence and practical acquaintance with the management of fruit trees will be careful to observe, and communicate to the public, the causes of their progress and decay, their diseases, incidents and properties, peculiar to our soil and climate, they may, by such communications, contribute still further to the prosperity of the country.



NUMBER VI.

THE support of the poor in England, and this Province, and every other civilized country, is a subject attended with difficulties ; one, on which a diversity of opinions is to be expected.

The doctrine of the English system of pauper laws, adopted also generally in the British Colonies now composing the United States, that parishes shall maintain their respective paupers, by parochial taxes, laid and collected for that purpose, although benevolent in principle, and just in theory, has been found, in practice, liable to great abuses. Besides the inconvenient restriction of common

people as to changing the places of their residence, and the numerous litigations between contending parishes relative to settlements, it has fostered a spirit of idleness and improvidence, and become at length intolerably burthensome. Many writers, political and moral, have accordingly condemned the system, as productive of more evil than good; and have thought it wiser to leave the poor to depend on the voluntary donations of the charitable and humane, than to provide for their maintenance by taxation.

Such, likewise, has evidently been the opinion of the Legislature of this Province. For, in their general adoption of the laws of England, at the first session of the Provincial Parliament, they expressly excepted all those which respect the support of the poor; and they have never passed any act themselves for that purpose. There is no legal provision on the subject, no public fund applicable by law to the support of paupers. It is true that in some districts the Magistrates in sessions have allowed disbursements for such objects out of the District funds, raised by taxes on rateable property; but it is found to have been an excess of jurisdiction, and the practice is discontinued. The legislature have not thought it proper to make the support of the poor a district charge; and it is to be hoped they never will. If a compulsory provision should be made by law, there are many reasons for charging the several townships, rather than the Districts, with the maintenance of their respective paupers. A decisive one is the impracticability of administering any district system of pauper laws, arising from the great extent of the Districts. Whether, therefore, the necessary relief is to be effected by taxation, or voluntary contribution, it ought to be by townships, in preference to districts.

Until some compulsory system shall be provided by statute, charity is the only resource. Individual beneficence may be aided by charitable associations. But, in some mode or other, they whom Providence has blessed with the requisite means, ought to contribute voluntarily, to the relief of the indigent and destitute. It is an indispensable duty, resulting from the state of society. We

are but stewards of what we possess, accountable for the use we make of it ; and a portion of it is evidently intended, by the great proprietor of all, for the benefit of our fellow men in less fortunate circumstances. That alone can reconcile a benevolent mind to the unequal distributions of fortune. This is a world of vicissitudes, also, as well as of inequalities. Any of us, our friends, our families, or children, however easy at present in circumstances, may, by some unexpected revolution, be brought to a state of dependence and indigence, and in our turn, need the hand of charity to relieve our distresses or supply our wants. Benevolence, therefore, is the common cause of all who partake of the lot of humanity. It is our interest, no less than duty, to encourage habits of industry and economy, and, by all reasonable efforts, to discountenance idleness, improvidence, dissipation, intemperance, vice, and all the usual sources of pauperism. But we must do something more. We must contribute a portion of our substance, or our earnings, to the succour of the children of want and distress. This is the clear dictate of reason, and the revealed command of Heaven. The divine author of our religion has enjoined it upon us to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to open our doors to the stranger, to visit the sick and imprisoned, and, as we have opportunity and means, to administer to the necessities of our brethren of the human family, the least of whom he has condescended to call *his* brethren also ; and has enforced his injunction by pointing to the retributions of eternity, to be awarded according to the exercise or neglect of that heavenly virtue.

In addition to the common obligations of charity, the inhabitants of this Province should be prompted by motives of policy and patriotism to give the present system of exemption from pauper taxes a full and fair experiment.

NUMBER VII.

TAXATION is one of the most interesting concerns of government, as it respects both governors and subjects. It is essential to the due administration of any kingdom, state or province, that taxes be levied, sufficient to defray

all necessary public expences; and that in selecting the objects and directing the mode of taxation, regard be had to the certainty and facility of collection. At the same time, it is important to the subjects, that these taxes be moderate, and as equal as possible in their operation; that no more of their income or the produce of their labour, than is really necessary, may be taken from their private use, and applied to that of the public; and that they may not be subjected to partial burthens, from which others, deriving equal benefit from government, are exempted.

The state of taxes, in any country, compared with the means of payment, is a good criterion of the political condition of its inhabitants. If the public exactions are light, they ought to be, and generally are, paid punctually and without murmuring. If they are heavy, their weight cannot but be felt, and they will be a subject of popular complaint.

In respect to taxation, this province is placed on very favourable ground. By the Statute of the 18th of George 3d, commonly called the declaratory act, it was declared, "That the King and Parliament of Great Britain will not impose any duty, tax, or assessment whatever, payable in any of his majesty's colonies, Provinces and plantations in North America or the West-Indies, except only such duties, as it may be expedient to impose for the regulation of commerce, the net produce of such duties to be always paid and applied to and for the use of the province, colony or plantation in which the same shall be respectively levied, in such manner as other duties collected by the authority of the respective general courts or general assemblies of such colonies, provinces or plantations, are ordinarily paid and applied." This declaration was recited and confirmed in the 31st of Geo. 3d, constituting the government of this province. Upon this principle the province was settled, and the faith of the nation is solemnly pledged for the observance of it. It is a fundamental article of our great Charter, our Provincial Constitution, that no tax, for the purposes of revenue, can be imposed upon the inhabitants of the Province, without the consent of their own representatives. Not only their concurrence

is necessary to such a tax, but it must even originate in their house.

Here is a double guard, placed by the constitution, in favor of the people. The representatives themselves, in common with their fellow subjects, bear their proportion of the taxes which they grant. They will, also, naturally feel responsible to those, by whom they have been elected, and by whose suffrages alone they can be re-elected.

To give full force to this constitutional responsibility, the acts, votes and proceedings of the Assembly, on subjects of taxation, and, indeed, upon all subjects of importance, ought to be published, and perused by their constituents, to enable them to judge of their conduct, and express such judgment in their elections. It is the fault of the electors, if the Assembly is not, in fact, as it is in theory, a true representation of the sense of the people. Ours is a government of checks. Each House has a check upon the other. His Majesty's Representative is a check upon both; and public sentiment is a rational check upon the three branches of government. Even in the most absolute monarchy, the opinion of a well informed public will be respected; and more so in a mixed form of government, one branch of which, like that of the mother country, is democratic, and in which the freedom of the press, and the right of public discussion are allowed.

In the exercise of their legislative discretion, the Provincial Parliament have laid several duties and indirect taxes, which are certainly not oppressive.

They have likewise established one annual direct tax, collectable in the several Districts, for District purposes, and predicated upon assessments, the principles and forms of which are prescribed by law. The Justices of the Courts of Sessions are authorised to make the estimates for these District taxes; but, not being the representatives of the people, they are properly limited in their authority, both in respect to the amount of the rates, and also as to the objects of expenditure, to which they are to be applied. In each district, the district fund is by the act made payable to such person or persons, as the Justices, at their respective general quarter sessions, or the greater part of

them, then and there assembled, shall, by their orders, direct and appoint, for the uses and purposes therein before recited, "and for any other uses and purposes to which the public stock of any district is, or shall be applicable by law." Here are the limits of their discretion, beyond which they have no right to tax their respective districts. They cannot apply the district funds to any other uses and purposes than those which are designated by law, as district charges.

Upon the principle already stated in relation to Parliamentary Representatives, and which is applicable also to Justices of the sessions, the district accounts, annually allowed by the Justices, should be published, to afford satisfaction to the inhabitants of the district, and to operate as a check against illegal, partial, or erroneous allowances.

Within the limits thus established by law, and guarded in practice, taxes cannot be very burthensome; and we have no Provincial direct tax, no pauper or other parish tax.

Towns which are allowed a police, are liable to a police tax, for the repair of their streets, and other town improvements. No one, surely, will grudge such an additional tax, applicable exclusively to the accommodation of his own town.

The highway taxes, required by statute, and payable in labour, have been complained of, as unjust, because not duly proportioned to the respective means of those, from whom the labour is required. His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor, in his speech, at the close of the last session of the Provincial Parliament, admitted the justice of these popular complaints, and expressed an intention to recommend some redress of that grievance at a future session. The whole quantum of labour applied to the roads is not unreasonable, in the existing circumstances of the country, although there might be, and it is to be hoped there will be, a more reasonable apportionment of it.*

Much dissatisfaction has also been manifested at the exemption of the lands of absentees from taxes, especial-

**An improvement of the law on this subject has since been adopted.*

ly highway duties, by which those lands are immediately benefited. I cannot deny that such lands ought to be taxed, as well as the non-resident lands of inhabitants ; and they who are of this opinion have a right, by all constitutional means, to endeavour to obtain an amendment of the law, to that effect.†

In the mean time, let us duly appreciate the actual state of our taxes. There is no country, whose inhabitants are, upon the whole, less burthened with taxation than this Province. It becomes us, then, as good subjects, to pay those duties which are required of us, with cheerfulness and punctuality. They are inevitable. "As sure as rates," is a proverbial expression. As they cannot be avoided, and are, besides, very reasonable and moderate, every one should make his calculations for them, and be seasonably provided with the means of satisfying all debts, whether of money or of labour, due to the public.

† *By an Act since passed, the lands of absentees are subjected to taxation. Such compliance with the wishes of the people tends to secure their confidence and attachment, and evinces true wisdom on the part of the Legislature. It is an exemplification of the very principle of representative government.*

NUMBER VIII.

PUNCTUALITY is a practical and very necessary virtue. It is of use every day, and in all circumstances of life.

The daily routine of domestic concerns requires it, in every department, and from every member of a well regulated family. A punctual observance even of the stated hours of meals saves much time, which would otherwise be lost ; and time, as Dr. Franklin justly observes, is money. Punctuality is the life of all appointments and meetings for private or public business, in which the concurrence of two or more persons is necessary to any transaction. In such cases, the want of it occasions waste of time, vexation and disappointment. Several, perhaps many, are detained by the absence or tardiness of one. It should be esteemed a point of honor, as well as moral duty, not to cause others to wait for us ; for, of all employments, waiting is one of the most unpleasant.

Mechanics have need of punctuality in performing work for their customers by the appointed times. A failure, in this respect, is vexatious and offensive. A customer is disobliged by having to call a second or third time for his promised work. In order to be punctual, a tradesman should make good calculations, and not, for the sake of grasping employment, engage work earlier, than he has good reason to believe it can be accomplished.

This observation is applicable to men in mercantile and professional business. With punctuality and perseverance, persons of moderate abilities have frequently succeeded ; while those who are dilatory, or neglectful of their appointments, generally fail, let their talents be ever so great. Almost every one, who has acquired a fortune by trade, or risen to eminence by a liberal profession, will be found, upon investigation, to have been exemplarily punctual in the transaction of business. The reader's own recollection will probably supply instances in verification of this remark.

But in no particular is the force of punctuality so immediately felt as in making payments. He who pays punctually, if his character is not grossly defective in some other point, is always respected. Like charity, this virtue "covers a multitude of sins." A punctual paymaster can ordinarily command what credit he pleases ; and there are times when credit is equivalent to money, as the means of either getting or doing good.

Nothing is more gratifying to a creditor, than to observe his debtor ambitious to effect his payment at the precise time limited by the contract ; and a habit of paying and performing promises punctually is a source of peculiar gratification to its possessor. Such feelings are justifiable and commendable. Whoever has the means of performing his promise ought not, through indolence or forgetfulness, or any light cause, to delay the performance a single hour. If human pride can ever be said to be virtuous, the pride of punctuality is a virtue. Misfortune and disappointment may sometimes unexpectedly deprive us of the power of being punctual. Every one, in the course of his life, has experienced more or less of such embarrassment.

But our inability is more frequently the consequence of too much facility in undertaking to pay, without considering sufficiently our means of payment ; so that when the stipulated time arrives, we are still unprepared for it.

The habits of the country, in point of punctuality, are too generally lax ; and this habitual laxity is aggravated by the present distressing scarcity of cash ; an evil which will continue, until it shall be remedied by the increased industry and economy of the inhabitants : for, so long as the country consumes more than it produces for market, our money will flow off, as naturally and as necessarily as water runs down hill.

Many expect relief from the institution of a bank in the Province. But the effect of that new institution is too much relied on. I hope it will afford great accommodation, and do much good. It will, doubtless, increase the medium of circulation, for a season, and to a certain extent. But the evil day of payment will overtake a Bank debtor as soon as any other ; and a bank cannot wait any longer than another creditor. Indeed a greater degree of promptness is expected in dealings with a bank. I very much fear, that the common want of punctuality, that sin which so easily besets the people of this country, will distress both the bank and its customers. It certainly will, unless its operations shall have a reforming influence upon the pecuniary habits of the country.

Every borrower of the bank, and indeed every other person among us, should bear in mind, that he cannot keep money, if he gets it, unless by his exertions, he earns, and actually procures, the means of paying for it.

NUMBER IX.

OUR relative duties are numerous. Indeed most of our practical duties are of that class. Every person is related not only to other persons individually, but also to various societies, natural, civil, religious, professional and voluntary ; and is bound by obligations of duty, resulting from each of his social relations.

He is a member of that natural society, called a family ;

first, that of his parents, and afterwards, perhaps, his own. Under this head, also, may be comprehended the whole of his kindred, both of consanguinity and affinity, to whom, more than to the rest of the world, his feelings recognize a relation.

At the same time, he is a member of civil societies, spreading, like concentric circles, from a smaller to a larger extent ; his parish, town, or city, his county or district, his province or state, and his nation.

Whether personally religious, or not, he is more or less connected with some society, church, congregation, sect, or denomination of religion.

His trade, profession, situation, or employment in life, constitutes another society, of which he is a member.

In addition to all these, almost every person has some voluntary associations with others, for special purposes of business, profit, amusement, literary or moral improvement.

From each of these various relations, appropriate obligations result, which, together with those immediately due to our Creator, are proper subjects of inculcation from the pulpit and the press. At present we shall confine our observations to one principle, applicable to all the societies, to which we stand related. *It is the duty, and should be the ambition, of every person, in proportion to his abilities, and by all honest means, to benefit and improve the society, of which he is a member.*

The reader, it is presumed, readily assents to this principle, in theory, as soon as he reads the statement of it. Then, sir, if you please, let me prompt you to the practice of it.

Have you a family, whose welfare you believe it is your duty to promote ? Pray, shew your faith by your works. The doctrine of Scripture is, " If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." The dictate of reason is the same. Now, before you apply this rule to your neighbour, be just enough to try your own conduct by it. If that bears the test, you may then, with a better grace, consider its application to others.

You are, or ought to be, engaged in some professional art, or business, or employment. Let that community, with which you are thus connected, be advanced, rather than prejudiced, in its credit and interests, by your connection with it.

You are a member of some civil society, a subject of some government.

Whether the township, district, or province, in which you reside, is the place of your nativity, or another which you have adopted and chosen for your residence, you are, by birth or choice, or both, an actual member of these civil and political societies; and, as such, are bound in duty, and should be stimulated by an honorable emulation, to contribute, by your personal exertions, to their improvement. All have not the same means of doing this. We cannot all be magistrates, or legislators; reformers of abuses, or founders of institutions. But, in some way or other, more or less effective, every person may, by actions or opinions, by precept or example, benefit the place where he lives; so that, when he leaves it, either by removal or death, he may leave behind him a just reputation of not having injured, but on the contrary improved it, during his residence there. Reader, whoever you are, and wherever you dwell, or were born, let this be an object of your ambition, a point of honour, as well as a principle of duty.

Resigning the moral and religious consideration of the principle to the preacher, to whose department it more immediately appertains, the Prompter takes the liberty to recommend it, as a civil and social virtue. The human mind is habitually influenced by an association of ideas. We should, therefore, consider ourselves, in some degree identified with the government under which we live, and every subordinate society to which we belong. Our attachment to them will then be an extended application of that love of self, which, without such liberalizing extension, is sordid and unjust. In this enlarged view of the subject, the patriot will agree with the poet, that "self-love and social are the same."

 NUMBER X.

WE are generally disposed to procrastinate whatever may be done at a future day, especially any thing which requires mental or corporeal labor, and more especially still, if the act to be performed is in any degree painful or disagreeable.

This disposition, if not an original propensity of human nature, easily acquires the strength of habit, and thus becomes what has been appropriately termed second nature. "Another time will do as well," says the sluggard ; and, although we feel and acknowledge that delays are dangerous ; yet all of us, more or less, act, every day of our lives, upon the same principle of procrastination. In this respect, as well as some others,

" We know the right, and we approve it too ;
Condemn the wrong, and yet the wrong pursue."

This observation is strikingly exemplified in our reluctance to look to the end of life, and make the preparation for it, which we know is necessary, as it respects this world, and infinitely more so, in respect to that which is beyond the grave. The consideration of the latter belongs to the preacher upon whose province I would not encroach. But, relative to the concerns of this life, there is one preparation for death, which falls within the scope of the Prompter, as a civil duty ; and that is the execution of a last will and testament.

Every person is required by reason and revelation to provide for his family, by all fair and lawful means in his power. This duty is not limited to his care and support of them during his own life. It extends to a proper disposition of such estate as Providence may have enabled him to leave behind him, for the benefit of his family. If, upon his death, the law would not distribute it in a manner which he thinks equal and just, it is his duty to provide for such a distribution by his will ; and he sins against his surviving kindred, as well as his conscience, if he neglects it.

The statutes of distribution having provided for an equal division of personal estate, among an intestate's children,

or other kindred of the same degree, there is generally less occasion for a will of personal estate, except in a few instances, where one child has received more by way of advancement, than others, or where a peculiarity in the situation or character of some of the children requires a distinction.

In the existing state of circumstances, habits, and manners among the inhabitants of this new country, parents commonly wish their estates to be shared equally by their children. But, as the oldest son, by the common law of descent, inherits all the real estate, almost every parent, who has lands, intends to make a will before he dies, to guard against the operation of that rule of law, and do equal and impartial justice among his children. This sentiment is so prevalent, that I have never known a person in the Province, who was willing that his eldest son should receive all his real estate, to the exclusion of sisters and younger brothers. It is a frequent remark among them, that the principle of primogeniture, applied to the simple state of society in this country, seems to treat all the children but one as illegitimate ; whereas they are equally dear to their parents, if they behave with equal propriety. So strong is this impression, that, in cases of intestacy, an eldest son, who takes advantage of the law in his favour, and does not voluntarily divide the inheritance, is regarded by his neighbours and acquaintances with a degree of contempt, as sordid and unprincipled. The reader's own observation is appealed to, for the proof of these facts.

But the inducement to claim all that the law allows him is so powerful, that no parent, intending an equal partition of his estate, should leave his heir subject to such a temptation, or expect him to relinquish a legal claim. If he thinks his other children ought to share in the real estate, it is his indispensable duty to provide for such an apportionment, and to do it in season, while he is in health, and has leisure to weigh all circumstances, and make his disposition deliberately ; and while he can procure competent assistance in forming his will, so as to carry his intentions into effect. Wills made on a death bed, in the hour of pain and anxiety, and reduced to writing by per-

sons who happen to be present, but who are not sufficiently acquainted with the principles and language of the law to use the proper technical terms, are generally imperfect, and frequently fail of the intended effect.

To guard against fraud in wills of real estate, the law has prescribed certain formalities of execution and evidence ; and for the sake of certainty, has established general rules for the interpretation of operative terms in devises and limitations of estate. For want of a due knowledge of these forms and rules of the law, on the part of those who write wills hastily and in cases of extremity, they so often prove ineffectual, that Lord *Mansfield* once expressed a doubt, whether those legal requisites had not done more hurt than good. Yet he felt obliged to enforce them by his decisions.

Two or three years ago it was expected that the principle of equal distribution, long since established, by statute, in regard to intestate personal estates, would be extended to real estates. A bill to that effect was moved in the Legislative Council, from a most respectable quarter, and passed that branch of the Provincial Legislature ; but it was lost in the Assembly, by a casting vote, the House being equally divided on the question. The anticipation of such a change in the law of descent, was a source of no small satisfaction, as the reader may probably recollect. But further objections have since been raised against it ; and whether it will ever be adopted or not, must depend upon the judgment of those to whom the constitution has entrusted the power of decision. If the law in this or any other particular, is not conformed to our individual wishes, we are nevertheless bound, as good subjects, to conform our conduct to the standard of the law. Any landowner who thinks the common law rule of descents unjust, as it affects his children, is at liberty to make such a disposition, as he may think more equitable. Instead of complaining of the law, then, let him do his own duty.

If the reader of these hints has any estate, which, in case of his dying intestate, would not be distributed among his children conformably to his sense of what is right, let him

be prompted to provide himself with a will, drawn according to his deliberate choice, and executed in due form of law. Should his circumstances or inclination change, he may, at his discretion, make any alteration in the will. But if, through a habit of procrastination, he should neglect making the intended testamentary arrangement of his affairs, until sudden death, or delirium, or some fatal casualty prevent his performance of what he feels to be an act of impartial duty, he would leave the world chargeable with injustice towards his own children.

NUMBER XI.

IT was a fundamental principle of the feudal system, on which the British Constitution is founded, that all the land of the nation is to be considered as originally vested in the Crown, and can be holden, by private subjects, only by grants from the crown, and assignments of those grants, by a regular chain of conveyance down to the present proprietor. The title is in the King, until a patent is executed by his representative ; and it remains in the last grantee, notwithstanding any bond, covenant, or other contract for a deed.

When this province was first settled, the settlers were allowed locations of land, and went into possession of their several lots, before the government was in such a state of preparation as to issue the patents. Transfers, of course, took place, without any legal title. Such transfers were evidenced by bonds or contracts for titles, accompanied in most instances by actual possession. A practice thus introduced from necessity, became habitual and common ; and was continued, through the influence of precedent and habit, after the necessity for it ceased. It is to this day a frequent mode of proceeding. Many bargains and sales, as they are improperly termed, are effected by bonds or agreements for conveyance at some future time, without any present deeds of conveyance. In some cases, this form of proceeding is inevitable ; but it is much more frequent than is necessary ; and its frequency may be accounted for historically, but not justified as prudent or proper. It is attended with many difficulties.

and productive of much evil. Deaths intervene. Descents are cast upon infants. Judgments create liens upon the land. Parties change their minds. Lawsuits, disappointments, delays, losses, frauds, and failures of titles, are among the natural consequences. These inconveniences, when pointed out to persons concerned, are generally admitted; yet the same persons will go on and do so again, because they have done so before, and because they see others do the same. So hard, and almost impossible, is it to change a general popular usage. Is not this all true? Yes, responds the reader, in his own mind. Pray, gentle reader, have you a deed for the lot or ground on which you are expending your labour, or your money, or depending for the inheritance of your children? If not, let the Prompter, like Nathan of old, whisper in your ear, "*thou art the man*;" yes, the very one, for whose particular benefit this admonition is intended. So, do not apply it to your neighbour; but go, or send by the first opportunity, to York, and take out the patent for your lot from the proper office; or, if your bargain for the land was with a private individual, go to him, and get his deed, in exchange for the bond you hold against him. When that is done, the Prompter may call again, and converse with you upon another matter, in which you are interested.

NUMBER XII.

HAVING, in a former number, touched upon some of the causes and consequences of the practice, too common in this province, of trusting to bonds for deeds, instead of actual deeds of conveyance of lands, the Prompter takes the liberty to remind his readers, that the law requires a memorial of each deed of real estate to be recorded in the registry of the proper county. The design of this provision of law is obvious. The want of it is strongly felt in Lower Canada, where titles are said to be so much embarrassed, by secret conveyances and encumbrances, that a person is hardly ever safe in purchasing a house or farm, except at a Sheriff's Sale. With us there is no such dan-

ger, unless the purchaser neglects his duty, as too many indeed do, to the hazarding of their title by their own neglect. The object of the law being to give notice of transfers, a subsequent purchaser, who, without such notice, takes a deed, and has a memorial of it duly registered, will hold the land, against a prior purchaser, who has omitted to give the notice required by law.

There must not only be a memorial registered, but it must be conformable to the provincial act. It would have been more simple, and in that respect more safe, if the act had directed the deed itself, at full length, to be registered, as it is in some of the United States ; but the register's books would have been more encumbered, and the fees of course greater. The law, therefore, only requires a memorial of the deed. It must, however, contain certain particulars mentioned in the operative terms of conveyance. It must be adapted to the deed. For the want of such an addition of a witness, for instance, as the act prescribes, a memorial has been holden to be illegal and void, and a subsequent deed of transfer, with a proper memorial duly registered, has been judged valid, notwithstanding a former deed with a defective memorial. The entire omission of a memorial, or neglect of its registry, is not so common an error, as the careless or unskilful manner in which it is drawn and executed. Many of the memorials actually registered, if examined by the standard of the law, would be decided to be materially deficient. The deficiency may lie undiscovered for years ; until some competition of interest or claim shall occasion an examination into the title, when a link in the chain of conveyances may be found defective, and the estate lost.

If the reader is about bargaining for real estate, the Prompter advises him, unless there is some peculiar reason to the contrary, to insist upon an actual conveyance by deed, instead of a mere contract for one ; and to have his deed and memorial drawn, or at least examined and approved, by some skilful conveyancer, and the memorial then registered without delay.

Many persons without a knowledge of the common law rules of conveyancing, or the provisions of our statutes,

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think, because they can write a fair hand, and have copies, or printed blanks of a deed and memorial, that they can fill them up, so as to pass well enough. But, "every man to his trade," says one of those rules of common sense, called proverbs. Conveyancing is a trade or art, and a more intricate one than many others. You would not employ a blacksmith to cut you out a broadcloth coat, because he has a coat pattern, and will cut one by it for a shilling; nor would you apply to a tailor to shoe your horse, because he lives nearer, or works cheaper than the smith. Then, why should you employ a schoolmaster, who understands grammar, and boards in your family or neighborhood, but has never studied the law of conveyancing, to draw a deed or memorial, intended to secure your own estate during life, and the inheritance of your children after you shall be laid in your grave?

Property of a personal and possessory nature passes safely from hand to hand in any intelligible mode of sale and delivery. But the permanency of real estate, and the dependence of one transfer upon another in succession, require more precision as well as formality, in the written instruments of conveyance.

NUMBER XIII.

WHILE a purchaser of real estate is examining the title, and procuring a regular conveyance of it, he should by no means neglect the boundaries. In a new country, like this, the bounds and lines of lots or tracts of land, which are bought and sold, are not, as they are in England, and other old countries, ascertained by actual, well known, and long continued possession. On the contrary, they are attended with more or less uncertainty, arising from hasty original surveys, made when the country was in a state of wilderness, and the land of little value; from the narrowness of the lots, compared with their length; the variation of the needle; the imperfection of the instruments used by different surveyors, and other causes; one of which is the general neglect of monuments and bounda-

ries. Hence many disputes have already actually occurred, and still more are likely to ensue. This is an increasing source of litigation throughout the Province. The boundary lines of adjoining lots are more frequently drawn in question, than the title of the lots.

In this state of things, it is peculiarly incumbent upon the purchasers of land to ascertain, with all possible care, the existing bounds and limits of the land they purchase; and upon all land-owners, to preserve and perpetuate such actual boundaries as are ascertained and known. It is a duty, which they owe to themselves and to the public; since nothing tends more to disturb the harmony of society, than the litigation which grows out of conflicting claims to the same land.

Connected with this subject, is a practice, too common in many of our townships, but of a most injurious and demoralizing tendency. The great demand for lumber has tempted persons, who in their common dealings would be esteemed honest men, to take occasion, from the uncultivated state of the country, and the uncertainty of limits and lines of lots, to cut timber where they have no right, and, in many instances, where they know they have not even a colour of right.

Such trespasses have been committed to a great extent. It is, indeed, one of the most crying sins of the land, and calls loudly for reprehension and redress.

The owners of lots, thus stripped of their timber, and depreciated in value, do not need the Prompter's advice, to pursue their proper remedy, where the trespass can be proved, and the trespassers have means of satisfying damages. But it is a moral as well as civilevil, against which the good people of this country, whether land owners or not, should be prompted to unite their influence, to discountenance a practice so unjustifiable in itself, and so pernicious in its consequences.

NUMBER XIV.

UPON contemplating the state of this Province, and considering the circumstances which have retarded its

progress, and the existing means of promoting its improvement and prosperity, I have long been of the opinion, that our farmers keep and use too many horses and too few oxen. Both of these domestic animals are useful, valuable, and indeed necessary. Each species of them are better adapted, than the other, to some appropriate uses; and either of them may be indiscriminately employed for many purposes.

Of the labour which is common to both of them, that which is performed by horses costs more than that which is performed by oxen. A horse team absorbs a larger portion of capital than an ox team. The horses themselves are of higher price. Their food costs more. Their harness and necessary furniture are more expensive. They are more difficult to be restrained; and therefore require greater strength of fences, and consequently more labour and expence in fencing a farm, and also occasion more damage and destruction of crops for want of sufficient restraint.

Horses are subject to a greater variety of diseases than oxen; are liable to more casualties; and when worn out, or disabled for service, their flesh is of no use; whereas that of oxen may be converted into beef, and produce a profit instead of a loss.

This is a beef-eating country. We consume a larger quantity of meat, in proportion to our numbers and wealth, than is consumed in almost any other country of equal population. It is, of course, a marketable article, which pretty uniformly bears a good price here, and will continue so, as long as eating shall be in vogue among us. Indeed our meat market is so high, that our neighbours on the other side of the Lake furnish a very considerable part of our supplies; a circumstance not very creditable to our farmers; one cause of which is the custom of using too many horses and too few oxen on their farms.

If the reader will do himself the justice to sit down and count the cost of his farming stock, including not merely the first prices, but also the accruing expences, losses and gains, he may theoretically agree with the Prompter in this opinion; but, through the influence of habit, and the

fashion of the country, will probably, in practice, continue for sometime longer to prefer horses to oxen. A pair of horses are more gratifying to the driver than a pair of sluggish oxen. And almost every man, rich or poor, feels some degree of horse pride. Besides, a change of custom is a gradual operation, requiring a considerable length of time. I am confident, however, that experience will eventually introduce the economical reform now recommended. The sooner it shall be effected the better. Meanwhile care should be taken to improve our horses and cattle of every kind, by obtaining the breeds most serviceable and profitable, and best adapted to the state of the country, and by adopting the best practical means of keeping, feeding, restraining, and managing them. In these particulars, there is ample room for improvement; and the Prompter would rejoice to see a spirit of competition spread more generally among the land-holders and farmers of every township in the country. It is a commendable emulation, conducive to private benefit and public prosperity.

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NUMBER XV.

IT has been justly said, that he who causes two blades of grain or grass to grow, where only one grew before, is a patriot. Such practical patriotism is within the reach of every inhabitant of this Province; and no country ever had more need of it, or offered better encouragement for the practice of it.

The natural resources of Upper Canada are ample; but they have been perverted, or neglected, and not brought into productive operation.

In this remark I have no reference to any measures or regulations of government. Political topics are not within the range of these desultory essays. I am speaking of the state of the country, and the means and capacities of the inhabitants to increase its productiveness, and enjoy the benefit of that increase.

Our soil is fertile; our climate is healthy; our taxes

are not heavy ; and yet the consumption of the country is greater than its produce. Our imports exceed our exports ; and the excess must be remitted in money, to the mother country, the Lower Province and the United States. Our circulating medium, already too scarce for the facility of business, is of course growing scarcer.

The reader has probably felt this embarrassing scarcity of money, and will readily admit it as an evil ; but he may say, in his heart, “ Why should the Prompter reprove me for it ? It is not my fault.” Not your fault, sir ? Pray stop a moment, if you please ; and tell me candidly, if you do not consume more, in various ways of expenditure, than you produce by all your earnings ? If so, then the present scarcity of money is your fault, as well as your misfortune ; and, whatever your rank or profession may be, the Prompter will not consent to your wearing the name of a patriot, or a loyalist, until you shall have made reparation for your share of the public evil. If you ask how that is to be done, the answer may be contained in two brief propositions ; *earn more, and spend less*. Cause two blades to grow, where one grew before. Increase the quantity and improve the quality of the marketable produce of the country. At the same time retrench your surplus expences, and save all you can of your earnings. Encourage others to do the same ; until, by such united industry and economy, the balance of trade shall be turned in your favor. Then money will flow back into the Province, and our pockets be once more filled with a ready medium of trade and business.

NUMBER XVI.

I Always form an opinion of a Farmer's character, from the state of his fences. If they are strong and neat, of sound materials, of good size and well laid up, I conclude that he is industrious, punctual in business, and thriving in his circumstances. But, if they are rotten, thrown down, or neglected, with hog-holes underneath, and the upper rails broken, I infer that he is lazy, or loves rum, or is overwhelmed with debt. If I were a merchant, or

a director of a bank, I should hesitate about trusting a farmer, whose fences are generally out of repair. It is a bad sign.

The fencing of a Farm in a proper manner is an important part of rural economy. If land is worth cultivation, it is worth fencing well. The expence, indeed, is considerable ; but it is a necessary one ; and good economy requires that it be done effectually, in the first instance. A weak fence requires such frequent repairs, that the final cost is more than that of one made strong and substantial at once. A low fence tempts horses, sheep and other cattle to leap over it, and teaches them to be unruly. It must then be raised higher, in order to restrain them, than would have been requisite, if made right at first. In the mean time, crops of great value are destroyed ; and the transgressing animals are injured, and perhaps lamed, by fetters, clogs and other instruments of punishment and restraint, which would not have been necessary, except for the deficiency of the fences.

It would be difficult to calculate how much is lost every year, on a farm of a hundred acres, in consequence of the neglect of fences. There is a loss of time and labour in driving out cattle, from the lots upon which they trespass, from time to time, and in repairing the breaches they make in the enclosures, as well as the loss of crops.

If the mischief is done by the farmer's own cattle, he is often provoked and angry at them, when he is himself more to blame than they are. But when the cattle are his neighbour's, especially if the fence also belongs to his neighbour's division, the provocation is much greater. The tresspassing beasts are driven away to the pound, or an action of trespass is commenced for the damages. A quarrel ensues ; and the families are at variance, probably for years, and perhaps during life. All this, for want of good fence. Next to tattling and slander, the neglect of division fences between adjoining farms is the most common source of feuds among neighbours.

Reader, if you are a farmer, and wish to enjoy the fruits of your labour, to thrive, to support your credit, and be esteemed a Christian or a good neighbour, take the

Prompter's advice, and be sure to make and maintain good fences on your farm.

FROM THE UPPER CANADA HERALD.

Mr. Printer,

UPON reading the Prompter in your Paper, my wife frequently says to me, "There, husband, observe what the Prompter says in this number. He certainly means you, and I wonder you don't take the hint, and conform your conduct to his advice." I cannot deny that many of his remarks are applicable to me, and I am sensible that I deserve reproof, and ought to reform. But my wife, like myself, has some occasion for reformation; and I don't like to bear all the blame in the family. Therefore I wish you would request your correspondent to prompt the women a little now and then, respecting the concerns of their department; that I may, in my turn, have an opportunity of quoting some of his economical hints to my dear Joan, who is, indeed, an excellent helpmate, upon the whole, but sometimes has as much need of good advice as,

Your humble servant,

DARBY.

NUMBER XVII.

"A Penny saved is as good as a Penny earned"

YES, and better too; for what is saved is in our actual possession, without any trouble or cost of collection: whereas we are not always sure to realize the benefit of our earnings.

The little items of money, and scraps of time, which almost every person expends unnecessarily, that is wastes (for every useless expence is really a waste) if added together, amount to a considerable sum at the end of the year; and, in the course of an ordinary life, their amount would astonish any one not used to economical calculations.

These might be saved; and, in the present hard times, such savings are of peculiar importance. Indeed the neglect of them has been one of the causes of the hardness of the times. Individuals and families, of all grades and descriptions, have generally indulged in expences, with regard to furniture, dress, fashion, articles of luxury and style of living, beyond what their circumstances authorised. Hence those numerous debts, of all classes of people, which the scarcity of money renders visible and dis-

tressing. How many persons, who were supposed to be, and might in fact have been, unembarrassed and independent, are now groaning under embarrassments, and complaining of the hardness of the times? One presses upon another, and he upon his next neighbour; until the pressure has become general, and complaint is the order of the day.

The cure for this evil is as obvious as the cause of it. *We must retrench our expenditures, increase our exertions, and be sure to live within the limits of our respective incomes.* There is no other remedy. Borrowing money of banks; speculating in lumber; and all the various contrivances to procure a fictitious and temporary credit, are quackeries, more likely in the end to kill than cure. Retrenchment of our superfluous expences is a bitter pill; but, in the present state of the pecuniary epidemic, nothing else will give relief.

On this point there is urgent need of a general reform; and in this indispensable work of reformation, every person has a duty to perform, either from his own necessities, or for the sake of his influence with others. Let the reader, therefore, whether old or young, a husband or wife, the head of a family or a single person, be prompted to take the subject into immediate consideration; and, at least, my friend, until you shall have paid off your debts, which at present hang so heavy upon you, study and practise the means of reducing your expences, and augmenting your earnings. Let a habit of frugality be established. Let industry and economy become fashionable; and, where they are adopted, let creditors be as patient as the times will permit; for almost all of us, in our turns, have occasion for such forbearance. In many cases of commercial embarrassment, it is an imperious duty. Business which is ordinarily transacted upon credit is most grievously affected by fluctuations in the circulating medium. A scarcity of cash occasions disappointments. One failure produces another. A succession of insolvencies ensues; and, if creditors pursue their legal remedies with rigour, the bankruptcy and ruin of meritorious but unfortunate individuals, is the inevitable consequence. Since the first

settlement of this country, debtors and creditors have, probably, never had stronger motives for exertion, on one side, and moderation and forbearance, on the other. There never was a fairer opportunity for the exercise of the golden rule of doing to others, as we would have them, upon a reverse of circumstances, do unto us.

NUMBER XVIII.

TRAVELLING in a retired part of the country, I once happened to be caught in a sudden shower of rain, at a distance from an inn, and took shelter in a poor unfinished house, standing by the side of the road. The owner, who appeared to be indolent and somewhat infirm, but possessed of a degree of shrewdness and humor, received me with a hearty welcome, and apologized for the leaky state of his house. It lacked, he said, half a dozen shingles upon the roof, near the ridge, where the rain, for the want of those few shingles, came through, and dripped down, to the injury of the furniture, and the annoyance of the family. He had, for a long time, intended to make the necessary repair, but had not yet effected it. When it rained, he always resolved to attempt it, as soon as the rain should be over. But, when the weather became fair, he was no longer sensible of any immediate occasion for it; and, as it could be done at any time, it passed out of his mind, until another storm revived his recollection, and renewed the determination, which he had thus often formed, and as often forgotten.

In short, sir, added the old man, when I suffer for the want of it, I cannot do the work, without great inconvenience; and when I can conveniently do it, I never feel the want of it.

This whimsical account of the operations of his mind made a strong impression upon mine; and I often think of it, when I see persons of my acquaintance resolve, and forget, and then re-resolve, to perform some necessary, but unpleasant or laborious act of duty.

If a man's finances are as leaky as the roof of the countryman's house, the sunshine of good fortune may render

him too warm and comfortable to be mindful of it, and the same embarrassment, which like a storm, makes him feel the leak, may, like that also, prevent his stopping it.

NUMBER XIX.

I PERCEIVE that a premium is proposed by the agricultural society of the Midland District, to encourage the growing of *Barley*. That is proper. But I see no such encouragement yet afforded for the cultivation of *Hops*; and have felt mortified, for our farmers, to observe this article imported into this Province from the States, when our own soil is so peculiarly adapted to it, that a sufficiency might be produced here, with very little care and expence. Hops grow in this country almost spontaneously. In any of our townships, a farmer may easily plant the vines, which will improve from year to year for a considerable number of years. His labour will be amply rewarded. At the same time, he will have the satisfaction of performing an act of patriotism. By supplying our own brewers with this useful article, he will contribute to retain in the province the money which is now carried out of it, to pay for what is consumed among us. Reader, do you drink beer? Then cultivate Hops, as well as Barley. If, in this, or any other particular, you neglect the means with which Providence has blessed you, to furnish supplies for our own market, and by such culpable neglect, indirectly co-operate in sending abroad our circulating medium, in payment for articles of necessary domestic consumption, the Prompter is bound by a sense of justice, to tell you, that you have no right to complain of the scarcity of money, or to ask for legislative aid. You must first do your duty, as an individual. Put your shoulder to the wheel in the language of the fable, and whip up your horses; exert all your own means, before you call upon Hercules to help you out of the mire.

By producing a plenty of the raw materials of beer, and thus promoting the manufacture and use of that healthy drink, you will at the same time, contribute to another object, most devoutly desired by the patriot and philan-

thropist, the gradual disuse of ardent spirits, so pernicious to the health and morals of any people, and of none more than the inhabitants of this province.

Beer, the favourite drink of the English nation, and cider, the national beverage of the Americans, being both of them adapted to this country, should be made here in plenty, from the produce of our own soil, and substituted in general use, instead of those liquid fires, by which, at present, so many victims of intemperance are habitually consumed.

NUMBER XX.

THERE is much good sense in many of those pithy little remarks, which have been so long current, as to have acquired the name of Old Sayings; and although Cervantes has ridiculed them, by putting them in ridiculous profusion, into the babling mouth of Sancho Panza; though Chesterfield, also, has proscribed them from the style of his man of fashion, they are, nevertheless, intelligible and instructive to common minds. One of these proverbial truths is that *a man must ask his wife's leave to become rich*. Both husband and wife, indeed, must co-operate in accumulating wealth. It requires their united and persevering efforts. A large proportion of their daily earnings will inevitably be absorbed by the support of their family, to which both of them are bound to contribute. From his superior strength, and the relative profits of the employments appropriated by nature or custom, to the two sexes respectively, he can generally earn and bring into the family stock, more than she; but the laying up or wasting of their joint acquisitions depends most upon her.

It belongs, almost exclusively, to her department to manage all domestic concerns, and direct the use of the various articles of provision and clothing, the two principal heads of family expence. If she has a happy faculty of economizing with neatness, order and elegance, she will administer a moderate income in such a manner, that her husband and children, her person, her house and fur-

niture, will all appear respectable ; while another family, with a larger income, administered by a slattern of a wife, will be ill-provided, ill-dressed, and scarcely decent in their appearance.

The care of children, especially in the early stages of childhood, the direction of domestics, and their daily habits of industry or idleness, saving or waste, are emphatically within the province of the wife.

These general observations are applicable to families of different ranks and circumstances in life. In the business and labour of men there is great variety, from their various situations, professions and employments ; but the round of female duties is substantially similar in families of all grades and conditions. Let their circumstances be more or less affluent, the domestic department is the proper scene of economy.

In this season of pecuniary distress, therefore, when men are so generally pursued by debts and duns, and threatened with writs and executions, the Prompter appeals, with confidence, to his female readers, to exert their influence in promotion of an economical reform, as essential to the prosperity of individual families and of the country at large.

While you are industrious yourselves, let no member of your families be inactive or unemployed. Idleness is, at once, an apprenticeship to poverty and vice. A habit of application to either learning or labour, to some useful exercise of body or mind, is one of the most essential parts of education, conducive alike to virtue, prosperity and enjoyment of life. This habit, which is better for any child than a patrimony, depends much upon female care and vigilance, at that early period. when, "as the twig is bent, the tree's inclin'd !" Industry, however, though absolutely necessary, is not sufficient, without frugality. Be prompted, then, my friend, whoever you are, that may honor these news-paper hints with a perusal, be respectfully prompted to review the objects of your habitual and occasional expenditure. If any of them are found to be needless, in these dull times, retrench them ; and apply the sums thus saved to the payment of debts, if your

husband has the misfortune to owe any ; if not, to the improvement of your estate. Guard against a passion for purchasing ornaments and useless articles, because they are recommended by fancy or fashion. Let not a silly emulation of superiors in rank or good fortune entice you into expences not requisite for the comfort of yourself or your family.

In short, if by industry and economy, your husband, according to the proverb, asks your permission to acquire property and become independent in estate, let your practice of the same virtues give him a satisfactory answer in the affirmative.

FROM THE UPPER CANADA HERALD.

SINCE I read, in the Herald, the Prompter's recommendation of the culture of *Hops* in this Province, I have observed several instances of the experiment being made with success, and will take the liberty to point out one of them. The luxuriance with which the Hop vines grow in front of the Commanding Officer's house, in the Town of Kingston, is sufficient to satisfy any observer, that the soil and climate of this country are well adapted to their cultivation. The process of planting, poling, tending and harvesting them, requires so little labour and expence, that it can hardly fail of being profitable.

It is to be hoped that some of our good farmers will devote a portion of their ground to this useful object, and that they may find their hop-yards among the most productive parts of their farms.

PHILO PROMPTER,

NUMBER XXI.

A medium between opposite extremes is so valuable a criterion of propriety, that it has been generally recommended by moralists, and is styled, by way of eminence, the *golden mean*.

No subject of human conduct is more clearly within the reason of this golden rule, than the duty of avoiding unnecessary innovations, on the one hand, and, on the other, an obstinate adherence to errors. To each of these extremes individuals and communities are exposed.

A man prone to sudden changes loses the benefit of almost every undertaking, by relinquishing it in an unfinished state, before a fair experiment has been made of

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its practical result ; and incurs much loss of time, and many positive inconveniences, by a hasty resort to visionary schemes, without counting the cost of accomplishing them, or considering their tendency and consequences.

A person of an opposite disposition plods on, in any old beaten road, however uneven or circuitous, for no other reason than because he has travelled it before ; and will not enter one that is smoother and more direct, because it is new, and he has not been accustomed to it. Of course, he loses all the advantages of the progressive improvements in the arts of life, resulting from reason and experience.

There is a story of two peasants, who used to carry their corn to the same mill, to be ground. One of them was a projector, credulous and fickle, varying his projects, as any new whim happened to cross his brain : the other was of a plodding turn of mind, unwilling to lay aside any practice, which he had once appropriated by adoption.

The former set out for the mill, with a grist of corn, in a bag, upon his horse, and himself seated on the corn. As he proceeded, it occurred to him, that his horse was too heavily burthened with such a double load ; and, to ease him, he at once dismounted, and took the bag of corn upon his own shoulder, leading the horse quietly behind him. Soon, however, he became tired of walking and at the same time carrying the grain. For his own relief, therefore, he mounted his horse again ; but, to favour the poor animal, and share the burthen with him, he still carried the bag upon his own shoulder, as he rode along.

The other peasant happened to have been sent to mill by his grandmother, when she was in her dotage, and he was a boy, with the grain in one end of the bag, and a stone, of equal weight, in the other end, to keep it balanced upon the horse. Having thus early in life, and under such venerable auspices, practised this mode of going to mill, he supposed it was a family practice, introduced for some good reason, which, however, he did not precisely comprehend, and sanctioned by long-continued use. Accordingly he held it in veneration, as an an-

cient and established usage, and persevered through life, in rejecting the plausible innovation of leaving out the stone, and dividing the grain into two equal portions, one at each end of the bag. He would say to those who endeavoured to convince him that he was carrying an unnecessary weight, and might save much labour by changing his practice ; “ Your reasons appear very specious in theory, to be sure ; but it was the maxim of my good old grand mother, that innovations are dangerous ; and I will not run the risk of a change ; as I cannot be certain, what it might lead to, or where it would end.”

Reader, do you laugh, in your sleeve, at the peasant, for riding with a bag of corn on his shoulder, to favour his horse ; or for carrying the weight of a stone to mill, as a balance for his grain ? Stop, if you please, and consider, whether you are not laughing at yourself. Examine your own conduct, and see if you also do not in practice bear some dead weight, for no better reason than that the habit of it was derived from your ancestors, or has been continued without examination, until it has become second nature.

Even legislators would, perhaps, do well to enquire, whether the laws of the country are not, in some particulars, still carrying a stone to mill, merely because the practice of doing so has the sanction of ancestral usage, originating, indeed, in a different state of society, or was introduced in the childhood of the Province, and has survived the occasion of its introduction.

The golden medium between a spirit of innovation and the perpetuation of existing evils, is a maxim as applicable to legislation, as to the affairs of common life. While rash and inconsiderate changes should be opposed with firmness, improvements, suggested by experience of the want of them, and recommended by sound reason, as adapted to our actual circumstances, ought from time to time, to be seasonably adopted, as well for their own sake, as to obviate complaint and discontent. Their adoption may be effected with more ease, and less danger, in a young country, whose laws are comparatively few and simple, than in an old one, in which a long train of dependent or con-

nected laws are combined into a system, that may be affected throughout by a change of a single part.

NUMBER XXII.

FUNERALS, in every country, are regarded by sensible travellers as characteristic of its state of religion, society and manners. There ought to be, and generally are, some religious rites performed at a funeral. It is an occasion on which the mind is most susceptible of the truths of religion, and most sensible of the importance and necessity of its consolations. The forms of burial service will, of course, be various, according to the respective tenets of different sects of Christians; but, in other particulars, the fashion of the country will prevail. There is, indeed, scarcely any subject, over which fashion has a more irresistible controul; and there is none, in which it is of more importance that it be decent and reasonable.

The funerals in this Province generally, so far as my observation has enabled me to judge, are exceptionable in several respects, which I take the liberty to suggest, for the consideration of those, whose influence, if united in such an object, may effect a practical reform.

1st. The manner in which a corpse is carried, from the dwelling house to the church, and thence to the place of interment, is inconvenient and indecorous. The coffin, without any thing to support it, is borne upon the shoulders of the carriers, who, in the act of shouldering their load, often shake it, as if they were trying to awake the dead, and then march along, in an awkward and apparently painful attitude, under their burden. When it is shifted from one set of carriers to another, the procession is interrupted and stopped. The body might be carried much more conveniently, as well as decently, in a hearse of moderate expence, or on a bier, at the cost of a very trifle. These, together with a decent pall, should be provided by the church, or society, or town, or by subscription, and kept by a sexton for general use.

2d. There is a want of order and decorum in our funeral processions, except those of military men. Such ir-

regularity subjects us to reproach, as destitute of a sense of propriety, and in a low state of national manners. All things, especially those of a public nature, should "be done decently and in order." This divine command is emphatically applicable to a funeral. In a grave, regular procession, there is a solemnity adapted to the mournful occasion. Not only they who move in it, but spectators also, partake of the solemn impression. But, at our funerals, we too generally huddle along, in a promiscuous crowd, with very little attention to regularity. The confusion of the scene is so common, that we seldom advert to its impropriety ; but strangers, accustomed to more orderly funerals, regard the custom with disgust, and speak of it in terms of censure.

3d. Funerals, in some of our towns, are becoming too expensive. This is a serious evil. In many instances, it already operates as a distressing tax upon poor families. Charges of printing and distributing cards of invitation, refreshments at the dwelling house, decorations of the coffin, scarves, gloves, tokens, presents, fees, wages, &c. absorb what might better be reserved for the payment of debts, the provision for a widow, or the maintenance and education of orphan children. But, when fashion requires a sacrifice, especially when the requisition is made under the imposing form of respect for the deceased, at a time when all other feelings are merged in those of grief and affection for a departed friend, the tyrant must and will be obeyed, whatever inconvenience or distress may be the inevitable consequence. Those who are blessed with affluence, and move in fashionable circles, ought to consider this, and magnanimously discountenance examples of expence, which, although not embarrassing to their own families, may bring embarrassment, if not ruin, upon some of their less fortunate neighbours, who struggle hard to support a respectable appearance and standing in society.

I was gratified to read, in a late Montreal News-paper, a proposition for a public meeting, to adopt measures for restraining and lessening the expenses of funerals. I have not learned the result, or the progress of this laudable attempt ; but I cordially wish it success. It is an object of real benevolence.

EVERY country has its peculiar customs, which form some of the most distinguishing lines in the national character of its inhabitants.

One of the peculiarities of Canada is the custom designated by the term *Charivari*. The practice itself, as well as the name, is of French derivation. It has long prevailed in Lower Canada, and was thence transplanted into this Province. There being no corresponding word, by which it can be expressed in our language, the original term, instead of being translated, is Anglicised and retained.

The custom is similar to an old English one, still prevailing in New England, and some parts of this Province, called riding SKIMMINGTON, from the name of the place where it is supposed to have originated ; with this difference, that the objects of a Charivari are some newly married couple, accused of what the mob are pleased to think an unseasonable or incongruous match ; whereas the Skimmington discipline is applied to a married person of either sex, guilty or suspected of misbehaviour towards a husband or wife. They are both attempted to be excused, and even justified, upon the same principle, that they are necessary to correct certain improprieties of conduct, which are not within the reach of legal correction.

That, however, is a dangerous doctrine. If a mob of people in disguise are to be tolerated with impunity, in inflicting punishment, by way of sport, and according to their sovereign will and pleasure ; one or two sons of mischief, under the cover of the usage, may, from motives of malice or resentment, or for mere frolic and fun, raise a party of disguised black-guards, to disturb the peace, and wound the feelings of any family. Every one has some enemies ; and, under the dominion of such a capricious fashion, no one can be secure from insult.

Meanwhile the law is trampled on, in the face of the community. For every Charivari, in which three or more are engaged, is an indictable riot ; and, if the rioters are disguised, as they are generally, and armed with any sort of *offensive* weapon, as they frequently are, it comes with-

in the Statute of 9, Geo. 1st, commonly styled the Black Act, in which it is, among other things, enacted, "That if any person or persons, being armed with swords, fire-arms, or *other offensive weapons*, and having his or their faces blacked, or being *otherwise disguised*, shall appear in any forest, chase, park, paddock, or other grounds inclosed with any wall, pale or other fence, wherein any deer have been, or shall be usually kept, or in any *high road*, open heath, common or down, &c. every person so offending, being thereof lawfully convicted, shall suffer death, without the benefit of clergy, &c."

That severe act was intended for the preservation of the public peace, and the protection of private individuals. But, not only the statute but the common law also are practically repealed, by the prevailing fashion, countenanced and connived at, as it has been. A person thus attacked may naturally enough conclude that the law of nature, authorising self-defence, at the discretion of the party injured, takes place in these cases; and rather than submit to public derision and disgrace, may protect himself by such means as happen to be within his power.

Under that impression, not long ago, a person who was the object of a Charivari, in one of the Townships of the Midland District, or some of his friends, fired upon the rioters, and several shots took effect, although not fatally. In the district of New-Castle, within two or three years past, one of a party concerned in a Skimmington riot, was mortally wounded, and fell a victim to the mobish custom.

I am far from justifying a resort to such desperate modes of defence; but I entreat every reader of these remarks to consider seriously, that when he joins in an unlawful enterprize against his neighbour, he puts himself out of the protection of the law, and becomes answerable, civilly and criminally, for any consequences, however fatal, that may ensue. A masked rabble, in the night, emboldened by a hope of concealment and impunity, excited by mutual emulation and the applauses of spectators, and, perhaps, stimulated by spirituous liquors, may proceed to excesses, beyond their first intention; and every one of the party is guilty of the whole outrage.

The friends of peace and good order, of a due observance and execution of the laws, should be prompted, by a sense of duty, more forcibly than by these cursory hints, to unite their influence, and put down this vulgar custom, the relic of a barbarous age, and the opprobrium of these more enlightened times.

NUMBER XXIV.

THE Agricultural Society of the Midland District, was, in its origin, cotemporaneous, and supposed to be connected, with some other projects, which, though well intended, were found not to coincide with the present views of the inhabitants in general. From that association of ideas, probably, and a misunderstanding of its nature and intent, it did not, at first, receive the support to which it was well entitled. As its object becomes better understood, it is more generally approved. Like other human institutions, it undoubtedly has imperfections; but its general tendency is to the public good.

It is true, as an objector lately remarked, it may, in its operation, create a degree of strife and envy. Actions good in themselves may be performed from bad motives. In the days of St. Paul, some "preached Christ, of envy and strife;" but the great Apostle of the Gentiles esteemed the preaching of the Gospel so necessary and important, that he rejoiced in it, even under those disagreeable circumstances. Envy, indeed, is an unworthy passion; but emulation, if not essentially virtuous, is auxiliary to virtue. It is the great spring of human exertion, through every successive stage of life, from the cradle to the grave. Moralists agree in justifying it, as the motive, by which children, in families, schools and seminaries, are stimulated to diligence, enterprize, and good behavior; and, under different forms, it continues to influence us in maturer years. "Men are but children of a larger growth." Competition animates their endeavours, extends their progress, and increases the effect of the whole mass of labor. This principle of action may justifiably be applied to the improvements in agriculture. To excite, aid and direct it,

in that application, is the legitimate design of an agricultural institution

The society in this district have commenced their operations, and had one meeting for the exhibition of agricultural productions and improvements. Under existing circumstances, it was a good commencement, and has convinced many, who before doubted, of the practicability of the undertaking. The future proceedings of the society will, of course, be commensurate with their means; and these must depend upon the liberality of those, who, being satisfied of the utility of the association, are disposed to contribute, through this organ, to the good of the public. The inhabitants of this portion of the province are of sufficient ability; and, it is confidently hoped, the experiment may prove, that they are not less willing than able, to support an institution, which has for its object an increase of the produce, the profit, the wealth, the respectability, the prosperity and happiness of themselves, their families and neighbours.

Farmers of the Midland District, you will surely listen, with candour, to the Prompter, who addresses you in your own behalf. This is emphatically your cause. It is your interest, that is directly and principally concerned.

Your soil is naturally fertile. Under a proper cultivation, it will be productive; and, what is of primary importance, it is your own. Most of you are proprietors of the farms which you occupy; and are, therefore, interested in the permanent improvement of them. In this respect, you enjoy an enviable superiority over the tenantry of older countries; who, having no freehold interest, are tempted to extract immediate profit, by temporary modes of culture, which leave the rented premises stripped, exhausted and depreciated in value. You have no such temptation to abuse the land you labor on. It would be cheating yourselves.

You are favored with a healthy climate. If your winters are too cold, and your summers too short, for some fruits and crops, congenial with more southern latitudes, there is a sufficiency of others, suited to this climate; and

you are exempt from the epidemic scourges of warmer regions.

Among your peculiar blessings, it is not the least, that your taxes are comparatively light. There is, perhaps, no country, where a smaller proportion of the income or produce of labor is exacted for public uses. Be sensible of this immunity. In many countries, taxation, with more hands than Briarius ever had, seizes upon the labourer's earnings, and leaves him but a pittance for his own use. That government which secures its subjects in the enjoyment of their property, and the fruits of their industry, with few and moderate taxes, is, and ought to be, sure of their attachment, wherever they were born. This allegiance, whether native or not, is at least natural. It is founded on the ruling principle of our nature.

You have the strongest possible inducement to be industrious. You are directly interested in the proceeds of your labor ; and your interest is your duty. Industry is not merely the handmaid of wealth ; she is, at the same time, a guardian of virtue and good morals. It is the order of Providence, that it should be so. To eat his bread in the sweat of his face, is the common lot of man. But yours is happily cast. The lines are fallen to you in pleasant places ; and you have a goodly heritage.

Notwithstanding the hardness of the times, in consequence of the scarcity of money, you are at leisure to cultivate the arts of peace. Your labors are not interrupted by alarms of war, by military draughts or requisitions. A comparison of your present condition, in that respect, with what you experienced during the late war, will enable you to judge of the value of peace and a quiet home.

Other comparisons may teach you lessons of contentment and gratitude. The first settlers of the country, as some of you can recollect, were generally poor ; and all of them encountered the privations incident to new settlements. But you are now secure and independent in your estates : you possess a competency, and have ample means of improving your property and your comforts, by reasonable exertions.

To stimulate your exertions, with a view to your im-

mediate benefit, and the consequent prosperity of the district and the province, is the design of the Agricultural Association. The prizes to be bestowed for that purpose are intended as testimonials of merit, more valuable in that view, than in point of pecuniary amount. Though the present state of their funds will not enable the society to extend their rewards very far, it is their wish to encourage every branch of agriculture proper for the country.

The most effectual and economical manner of clearing new land is worthy of attention, in a district, of which so large a portion is still covered with forest trees. This process should be connected with the saving of the ashes, and the conversion of them into potash and pearlash salts, in which there is need of economy, as well as philosophy. There is another object, too little regarded in a new country, and that is the reservation of sufficient woodland for fuel, conveniently situated in relation to the dwelling house. Our townships are yet in their youth; but experience has already convinced the owner of almost every cultivated farm of his error in this particular, when it is too late to remedy it. The expense of fuel will eventually be great, in a country not supplied with coal or peat.

Fencing is another thing essential to a farm. Our forests on the north side of Lake Ontario are destitute of chesnut, one of the most useful species of timber for rails; and other suitable kinds soon become scarce on a farm of ordinary cultivation. In some places, resort must be had to walls of stone, and hedges of thorns, at present hardly known in this province. The cheapest and best practicable mode of enclosing a farm, and dividing it into proper lots, with good and sufficient fences, of the materials produced on the farm, is worthy of consideration and experiment.

Different soils require different modes of ploughing and preparation for seed. Improvements appropriate to your clayey, limestone land, and to all the varieties of your soil, and adapted to the various productions of the country, may result from judicious observations and actual experiments.

The saving and application of manures are less important in a new than an old country; and have hitherto re-

ceived very little attention in this province. But the time has come when it is necessary to attend to this subject. Many of your fields are exhausted by a succession of crops, and manuring them is already an object of importance. What effect may be produced on your soil by gypsum, so generally and so successfully used a hundred miles south of you, ought to be ascertained by experiments, accompanied with a calculation of the expense of procuring it.

Implements of husbandry suitable to your farms are susceptible of improvement in their construction, and the application of them to actual use.

A proper course of tillage and rotation of crops are subjects of no small practical consequence ; and every year increases the necessity of attending to them.

Improvements may doubtless be made in the selection of seeds of the most useful grains, grasses, roots and vegetables, and in the time and manner of sowing and planting them, as well as harvesting and securing their respective crops, and preparing them for market or family use.

There is great room for improvement in the breeds of domestic animals suitable for service, consumption or market ; and in the manner of feeding and managing them to the best advantage.

The management of dairies, also, and the manufacture of cheese and butter, are important collateral branches of agriculture. Such improvement in these articles as this district is capable of, would increase the comforts of its inhabitants, and retain among them large sums of money, which are now paid to their neighbors in the state of New York.

In connexion with agriculture, you should encourage domestic manufactures of the raw materials of your flocks and fields. They may furnish employment for idle hands and vacant hours, and save you many items in the bills of your family expenses ; items, which, regarded singly, appear inconsiderable ; yet, when charged and added up by a good mercantile accountant, amount at the end of the year to a formidable sum, and perhaps occasion a bond & mortgage, with the addition of register's fees and lawyer's costs. Household manufactures, intended for family use,

wear better and last longer, than fabrics which are designed to be good for sale only, and which come to you charged with duties, commissions and profits, besides the freight and transportation of many thousands of miles. The time has been, when your wives and children might have felt mortified to be seen in home-made clothing ; but the country is fast out-growing that silly pride, and fashion will no longer object against your manufacturing and wearing the produce of your own farms.

Orcharding, likewise, as an appendage of agriculture, comes within the scope of our Agricultural Society. The reputation of the Midland District, for apples and cider, is below that of some others. This is indeed a considerable market for fruit, not only from Genesee, but also from Niagara. Our brethren there may perhaps have some advantages of climate beyond ours ; but that is not the principal cause of their superiority. The difference is more in the local spirit which has prevailed in the two districts respectively. In that, a few of the first settlers set an example of early attention to fruit trees ; the fashion spread, and became general. In this, there was unfortunately an original want of ambition ; in consequence of which, fruit was too generally neglected in most of our townships. Some valuable exceptions, however, are sufficient to demonstrate that the fault is not in our soil or climate, but in ourselves. Motives of local pride as well as personal interest ought to induce every landholder here, to take some pains individually to raise the character of the district, and particularly of the township, in which his farm is situated, by the sowing of nurseries, the setting out of orchards, the melioration of fruit by engrafting and innoculation. On this and other branches of agriculture, it is fondly hoped that a spirit of emulation is now rising and spreading among you, and that improvement will soon be the order of the day.

Every friend to the prosperity of the country should promote so laudable a spirit, both by precept and example. Let competition be excited in every neighbourhood and township throughout the district, and in all the several departments of husbandry. Let it be a subject of compa-

riſon, of obſervation and diſcuſſion, that it may become the faſhion. To render agriculture faſhionable, the Emperor of China, once a year, goes into the field, with his court, and actually holds the plough in perſon, as an example to his ſubjects. We have no emperors to teach us the art of ploughing ; but we have men of reſpectability, whoſe united influence may give an impuſe to the public ſentiment, in favor of exertions and improvements in agriculture. It is a ſcience, as well as an art. The natural philoſopher, the chemiſt, the geologiſt, the man of taſte, the admirer of nature, not leſs than the day laborer, may here find exerciſe for his proper talent. There cannot be a more delightful employment than that of a ſcientific agriculturaliſt. Gentlemen of intelligence and leiſure may amuſe themſelves, while they ſubſerve the public welfare, by collecting and publiſhing the reſults of practical experiments, made by themſelves or others. The newspapers read in the diſtrict, are open to ſuch publications, and they will be peruſed with more intereſt, than ſpeculations or experiments on ſimilar ſubjects made in other countries.

It is reaſonably to be expected that many competitors will in the courſe of the preſent year make ſeaſonable preparations to enter the liſts for prizes, at the next year's exhibition ; and that improvement in the various branches of agriculture will by that time be viſible in every townſhip of the diſtrict.

NUMBER XXV.

FROM the firſt ſettlement of this province, the general uſe of ardent ſpirits has been a ſerious evil. Their impoveriſhing and demoralizing effects have been, and ſtill are, too viſible not to be ſeen by every attentive obſerver, and lamented by every patriot and philanthropiſt. Brandy has ſlain its thouſands, and rum its ten thouſands. Wherever they have been freely and habitually uſed, their conſequences have in many inſtances been penury, madneſs, diſeaſe and death ; and no where are their victims more common than in this country. The national drink of the Engliſh is beer, of various qualities ; and in England drunkenneſs is not ſo frequent or fatal as here. The comparison may be extended to New England, where the popular beverage is cider, and the people are comparatively temperate. In Canada more ardent and ſtimulating ſpirits are in cuſtomary uſe ; and the natural conſequences follow. A change in this cuſtom of the Canadians would be a ſalutary reform, conducive alike to the preſervation of their health, the amendment of their morals, and the advancement of their proſperity and happineſs.

If, in the place of rum and brandy, they would generally ſubſtitute beer and

cider, the proper productions of the country, they would incur less danger of habitual intemperance, that sin which most easily besets them, and at the same time would expend a smaller portion of their substance; and that reduced expense would be defrayed without sending abroad the circulating medium, which is already too scarce among us for the convenient transaction of business. The farmer would drink as well as eat the produce of his farm; and of course would be less affected by the variations of foreign markets, more secure against debts, and more independent in his circumstances. His taste, under the regulation of habit, would soon relish and even prefer these milder substitutes.

In the mean time, let the gentleman of fortune, whose income enables him to afford it, continue to import his liquors. Let the connoisseur still enjoy his wine, his brandy and Jamaica spirits, ripened with age, and mellowed to his taste, by two voyages across the Atlantic.

The husbandman, whose lot it is to earn his living, instead of living upon the earnings of his ancestors, or on a stipend derived from the public revenue, should adopt a system of practical frugality. He ought to make his cider himself, and pay for his beer with barley and hops, the growth of his farm. Such an exchange would be reciprocally beneficial to the brewer and to himself. He would then have only to go to his own cellar, or his neighbor's brewery, for his liquors; and not to send for them, as he now does, to France and Spain, to the African and West India Islands. What a saving there would be in the single item of transportation, the cost of which, for so many thousands of miles, is a dead loss to the world, while it is paid for by the consumer of imported spirits, in addition to the original price of those articles!

In this remote corner of the world, at such a distance from the ocean, every good farmer should be supplied with his stock of family liquors from his orchard, his barley field and hop yard. With such economical supplies, and corresponding economy in other things, he may take his comfort, live within his means, bid defiance to duns and deputy sheriffs, and have no more cause to complain of the dullness of the markets, the scarcity of money, and the hardness of the times.

Is not this conclusion founded on fact and fair reasoning? 'Yes,' says a reader, lounging at a tavern; 'the Prompter is perfectly right: brandy and rum have ruined many of my acquaintance, and will ruin us all, if we don't reform.' Then lays down the newspaper, and calls for another half pint, determined to go home, and hereafter be sober and industrious—when the leopard shall change his spots, or the Ethiopian wash himself white.

NUMBER XXVI.

BY an act passed at the last session of the Provincial parliament, additional duties are laid upon the importation of produce and manufactures from the United States. These duties, which met with some opposition, and will undoubtedly press hard upon certain classes of people, are intended to protect and encourage the farmers, who are the most numerous part of our population.

Merchants, mechanics and professional men are all entitled to the protection of government; but it should never be forgotten, that *the first interest of Upper Canada is agriculture*. We are, and ought to be, an agricultural people. This is the predominant character of the Province.

Commerce, indeed, is a necessary auxiliary, without which the produce of our farms, beyond our own consumption, would be of little value. These interests being thus connected, and in some measure mutually dependent, neither of them ought to be sacrificed to the other; but both of them, together with all others, should be patronized by law, in proportion to their respective degrees of importance. Consequently, as agriculture furnishes employment and support for a great majority of his Majesty's subjects in the Province, it justly merits a principal share of public patronage. Neither the people nor their Representatives in Parliament should lose sight of so important an object.

Upon this principle, the new impost duties were laid. As a general princi-

ple, it is just, whatever defects or disproportions there may be in the application of it in the details of this particular act; errors which can be corrected, as practice and experience shall require.

But something further is requisite. These duties will operate immediately in favour of the farming interest; but they will not be effectual, without the strenuous co-operation of the farmers themselves. Our surplus productions must find their way to market, where they will be met by those of our competitors. In the commercial world, the prices of marketable articles, like fluids in the natural world, tend to a level. To that common level of market prices, in spite of local and temporary restraints, the produce of rival countries, beyond what they consume at home, must eventually be carried. Such is the natural course of things.

No protecting or prohibitory duties, therefore, nor any other legislative regulations, can long maintain the market value of such produce on the Canadian side of the Lake at a rate above the prices current on the American side; any more than an act of Parliament can raise the water of the lake higher on this than it is on the opposite shore. In both elements there may be temporary swells, from one side to the other; but there can be no permanent accumulation. The unconsumed produce of the soil, if not wasted, will flow off to the ocean of foreign markets. There the exporters of it from each country must meet in competition; and there it must be practically ascertained how much they can afford to pay for it to the producers; and thus the prices will be settled there, which will govern the value of the respective articles at home.

Instead, therefore, of calculating upon any lasting superiority of prices, our farmers should seasonably prepare to compete with those of the other shore, in the quantity, quality and reasonableness of the productions which they furnish for exportation.

Farmers of Upper Canada, permit the Prompter, on the approach of the agricultural season of the year, to suggest, that you are the most numerous portion of the inhabitants of the Province. You possess the largest share of the substantial property of the country. You are its main stay. Its prosperity depends on you, more than any other class of people. Your exertions must determine the experiment, whether this Province can support an advantageous competition with the neighbouring States, in the market of flour and other agricultural productions. In this struggle, it is the duty of the legislature to attend to your interest, and give you every practicable encouragement, consistent with the general welfare. But, after all, your success, under Providence, depends upon yourselves.

There is one circumstance in our foreign relations, which for the present, promises a favorable operation. The United States, with a view to counteract the British system of Colonial monopoly and exclusion of foreigners, established by the navigation laws, have interdicted the commercial intercourse between their ports and those of the British Colonies, and have thereby excluded themselves from the British West India market, which is open to the vessels and produce of Great Britain and her territories. In that market, therefore, our exports may obtain a priority, while those of the United States are driven to more distant parts of the world. This may for some time operate to your advantage.

In most respects you stand on an equal footing with your rivals. Is not your soil as productive as theirs? Are you not as little burthened with taxes, and embarrassed with debts, as they are? Are you not as capable of managing and improving your farms, as they? Are you not as healthy, as active, as industrious, as frugal, as patriotic and ambitious, as resolute and persevering? Be prompted, then, to make a vigorous general effort, this season, while the operation of Provincial duties, and American non-intercourse with the West Indies, aids you, to turn the scale in favour of your country. The attempt is honorable, but arduous, requiring the exertion of all your energies, and the husbanding of all your resources, extending also to the economy of families, as well as the labours of the field. Every man, woman and child should unite in it, and every patriot wish you success.